



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

for the objections stated might be modified. The objections Mr. Jennings stated are those of method, rather than those of principles. For instance, I suppose a good many of you know that Mr. Legler himself is under civil service rules; that the Civil Service Commission of Chicago does not determine individual cases, but states that certain positions are not subject to the residence rule, that ruling holding for all time. I had the honor to serve the city in its selection of its librarian. I hope you will agree with me in thinking that I did not fail in my duty in the selection which was made. Now, that selection was made under the civil service rule, unabridged and directly administered. I am not speaking so particularly of the examiners as I am of the board which laid down the conditions. They did allow us to give 50 per cent weight to the experience and arm to arm knowledge of the personality of the man. Without such a condition as that, we would have been unable to take the man whom we thought would succeed, and, I am glad to say, is succeeding. I had hoped to have Mr. Legler speak on the efficiency of the system as it exists in the city of Chicago, and also Miss Hume has prepared for us some of her experiences, but our time is now up and we must adjourn.

(The following paper was prepared by Miss JESSIE F. HUME for this session, but was not read for lack of time.)

HUMORS AND HORRORS OF MUNICIPAL CIVIL SERVICE

Had I the making of the title of this discussion, the humor would have been left out, as there is no humor at the time in the activities of the municipal civil service commission. Afterwards perhaps, one sees a gleam here and there.

The initiative action of the municipal civil service commission is insidious. It is only later when struggling in the grasp of the octopus, that one realizes its power. We were required to send our pay roll for approval and did so. From that moment no change could be made in it without the approval of the commission, and of the board of estimate and apportionment, both

of them bodies slow in movement and hard to convince when an expenditure of money is under consideration. Moreover, we found out all the restrictions through experience, by the breaking of them and consequent friction and delay.

Increases in salary were voted by our library board, entered on pay roll and forwarded. Increases in salary were deducted. Upon inquiry we were directed to obtain the approval of the board of estimate and apportionment. They were notified, our letters were laid on the table or never taken up at all. Increases made in the salary of two of the highest employees in the library were thus refused or delayed for more than two years, and were finally obtained only by the appearance before a committee of the board of estimate and apportionment of a representative of the library who convinced them of the propriety thereof. This resulted in the resignation of some of our most efficient librarians who asked for and deserved increases, over which the various boards and committees delayed so long that resignations were filed. So the staff was depleted of its best equipped members.

As to the filling of vacancies, this had to be done under set rules, fearfully and wonderfully made, obtaining an eligible list of not more than three names, and offering the position to each one of the three, selecting one. It commonly happened that all declined, usually on account of distance, and the whole process had to begin again. Thus it took two months to obtain a janitor for a Carnegie branch library. Three men were written to and all came. The first could speak no English at all, he came with an Italian interpreter, and as it was manifestly impossible to engage the interpreter also, he was not considered. The next man had no fingers, but said he could do all that need be done. The third was an old German, introduced by Mr. Blank, the ward leader, as he told me twice over. The old man was irascible, stupid, and scarcely knew a dozen words of English. The ward leader was inclined to be masterful, but after a contemplative look at the old man, he

broke down, laughed and left, saying he had to bring him, it was expected of him, and we parted on friendly terms,—very necessary under civil service rules.

When we were first marshaled in the ranks of the civil service commission, they called a general examination, and our librarians were notified. One of them came to my office, a high school graduate, doing well in a subordinate position. She had a madonna face with great blue eyes. She assured me with tears standing in them that she could not undergo an examination, and would have to resign unless she was excused, and held to her resolution until I chanced to say that the civil service commission required the examination. Then a gleam of angelic joy crossed her features and she said in a low, confidential, happy voice, "Oh! is it a civil service examination? Then Papa'll fix it." And Papa did, and later when promotion was in question, Papa "fixed it" again, and others papas did likewise, and the eligible list was a most remarkable thing.

On the eligible list for assistant librarian, a grade higher than chief of department, we had people who commonly used such expressions as "I done it," and "I seen it," and "Them's the ones." There was only one course to pursue, we refrained from appointing to any but the lowest grades, and for a time and quite a long time, the library was conducted without the higher grade people needed for the proper development of the library.

Then as to education—after our release, our board held a general examination for regrading, assuring the staff that none would be dismissed nor any salary reduced. Some forty or fifty candidates responded. I corrected the papers and as I read I was aghast, then wholly discouraged, till I passed the critical stage and became simply the looker on, whereupon I perceived through the meaningless verbiage, the throes of drowning ignorance, the master strokes of mother wit, and the engaging boldness of young America. They classed themselves into groups, the wily diplomat, whose answer would be partly

right in any case; the boldly ignorant, who took chances gaily; the fine imaginative; the common sense girl; and in a great majority, those of obscure mind; all full of human nature.

The questions were the usual ones, on natural phenomena, on noted people, on terms of expression, historical, et cetera. I give a few examples of replies, all verbatim.

Diplomatic.

The **Renaissance** was a period in French history when the kings and queens were of a certain type.

Ocean currents are caused by the water changing all the time. (How undeniable!)

Trade winds were winds which start around the Gulf of Mexico and come west as far as the Pacific Ocean and go back again, and if a captain on a boat is caught in those trade winds, why, he wouldn't keep sailing, he would dock the boat right away and wait until they calmed down.

Auto-suggestion deals with automobiles. Would be on explaining the mechanism and the working of the mechanics.

Evolution. The general changes which take place the world over as time goes on.

New York City churches. They are needed in this wide world. They do some good.

Guesses.

Out-door relief means that when one goes out of doors they find relief from the work inside.

Mirage is caused by the meeting of heavenly bodies after a storm. (One of our trustees suggested that it must have been a brain storm.)

Mirage. The cause of a mirage is the action of the wind and heat upon the naked eye.

Balance of trade. When persons trade they trade equally, that is, both get trade alike or their trade balances.

Balance of trade is if a man is failing very badly in business and he is loosing (sic) his customers the remainder of his customers would be called balance of trade.

Watered Stock comes from other countries, and has to cross the ocean.

Watered stock are fowls, such as ducks and geese.

And one girl, led away by the liquid syllables wrote boldly that "Savonarola was noted for her beauty."

Library Economy.

Psychology. The language of the soul. Two books on the subject are *The spirit in prison*, by Robert Hichens, *Science and health*, by Mary Baker Eddy.

A **classic** is something select, good English, and good form, not too thrilling.

I would look in the catalog for the wives of Henry VIII. under Polygamy.

For the average boy who is anxious to educate himself after he leaves high school, or for one who would bother himself to ask conscientiously for a course of reading, I would suggest first, an excellent dictionary, one of the modern encyclopedias and the Bible.

When a book is to (sic) bad for mending and to good to throw away, it is sent to the binder.

Obscure.

Invincible Armada. A Spanish vessel, made in the shape of a half moon, to stand the siege of any country, finally captured by the British.

Renaissance is a country in Italy, and it is noted for those fine laces which are sent to this country.

Earthquakes are caused by overpressure of heat and gas in the earth, and it has to come forth some way. In this state the earth cracks in the form of earthquakes.

Marshall Ney is known for his wit and humor.

Taking of Moscow. I know that Cromwell was prominent in this event.

Holy Roman Empire was that part of Europe governed by Augustus, the Holy Roman Emperor.

But not all the civil service candidates are impossible. Here are some definitions from a mind of different type.

St. Helena. The little island in the Atlantic where Napoleon I. ingloriously ended his glorious career.

Hendrick Hudson. A Dutchman of the 16th century who discovered and sailed up

the waters of our beautiful river named Hudson in his honor.

Joan of Arc. The mystic and girlish leader of the French in the time of Charles VII.

Holy Roman Empire was the empire established by Charlemagne, including all of Europe nearly, and never really holy.

The exception proves the rule, and the clear and limpid mind which expresses itself thus is a lone star in the sky of the municipal civil service eligible lists, revealing the void in which it shines.

Mr. HILL: I don't like to leave this hall without saying that I believe in civil service, that is, civil service within the library itself. I believe that such civil service is the very best thing for a library. In Brooklyn promotions are made under this system and I am sure from the experience we have had in ten years in the Brooklyn public library that such civil service as obtains there does not lead to inefficiency, but on the other hand keeps every member of the institution up to the highest possible standard.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very glad that Mr. Hill said what he did, because I think that is the ideal, and it is being carried out in a few libraries. Few of you realize the enormous prevalence that the patronage system still maintains among libraries.

Dr. STEINER: I don't want to leave the hall either without saying the same thing, that a system within the library is absolutely the proper way of administering a library. We have had that system for the last twenty years in Baltimore and I would be ashamed to administer a library that did not have it.

Mr. D. C. BROWN: I myself have been brought into contact with civil service boards for twenty years and I find all the objections of the spoils system of politics exactly the same as in the paper read this morning, and so I would like to move a postponement of this discussion to the next session of the association.

The motion was carried, and the discussion was postponed to the third general session.

Adjourned.

THIRD GENERAL SESSION

(Shakespeare Club, Monday, May 22,
9:30 a. m.)

Joint session with the League of library commissions, Mr. Henry J. Carr presiding in behalf of the American library association, and Miss Clara F. Baldwin in behalf of the League of library commissions.

Mr. Carr took the chair and after brief preliminary remarks stated that the secretary had a telegram from President Wyer which would now be read.

Secretary Utley read the following:

Albany, N. Y., May 20, 1911.

Geo. B. Utley, Secretary,

Hotel Maryland, Pasadena, Calif.

Please convey to the members of the Association my deep appreciation of the expressions of confidence and encouragement which reached me to-day in the message transmitted by you.

(Signed) J. I. Wyer, Jr.

The CHAIRMAN: This particular session is a joint one of the League of library commissions and the A. L. A. Representing and acting as the chairman for the A. L. A. on this occasion, it gives me pleasure to call forward to the chair, for that part of the program which comes under the League of library commissions, Miss Clara F. Baldwin, president of the League.

The CHAIRMAN: (Miss Baldwin takes the chair). The problem of library extension is one in which we are all interested and one which we are all trying to solve. The first paper this morning is "The administrative units in library extension," a comparative study of the library extensions to the county, state and township, and this will be presented by Mr. MATTHEW S. DUDGEON, of the Wisconsin free library commission.

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN LIBRARY EXTENSION—STATE, COUNTY, TOWNSHIP, CITY

The most interesting feature of modern library work is the unanimity with which librarians are seeking to search out the unbooked individual—he who has no books within his reach—to make of him a booked

if not a bookish individual. It is now as always the aim of all librarians to get the greatest number of the best books into the hands of the greatest number of the most book-hungry people at the least expense. In accomplishing this, however, the definite emphasis seems at present to be placed upon locating the book hungry and giving to them a library relationship that will enable them to feed their book hunger.

Standard of library efficiency. The success of any unit of any library extension system must be comparative. In order, therefore, to arrive at a just judgment upon the efficiency with which any system can be operated or any unit organized, some standard of efficiency must be employed. Many a school boy reading present day periodicals can state with the greatest accuracy how many bricks a skilled bricklayer ought to lay under the efficiency system of scientific management. He can explain just how many pounds and pieces of pig iron an efficient man under scientific management can pile upon the platform of a flat-car in an eight hour day. When, however, one commences seriously to study the comparative efficiency of the different units of library extension, it develops that there seems to have been established no standards of efficiency with which to measure the comparative efficiency of any of the units under consideration.

There seems, therefore, to be nothing to do but to make a standard of efficiency—to search for a standard in the records of the achievements of various library enterprises. In this search, however, many difficulties arise; for books can not be counted as bricks, nor can the cost of the library work be placed on the same basis as the cost of moving blocks of pig iron. It seems, however, that four elements must be considered in determining the efficiency of any literature work:

1. The book need—the acuteness of the book hunger of the person served.
2. The quality of the book, both intrinsically and also with reference to its value to the individual who comes in contact with it.